

App. No. 10/727,276
Amendment Dated: May 30, 2006
Reply to Office Action of February 27, 2006

Amendments to the Claims:

1 (currently amended): A method for representing non-structured features that span other tags in a ML document, comprising:

determining a start tag location for a non-structured feature;

determining an end tag location for the non-structured feature; and

placing a start tag at the start tag location; wherein the start tag is an empty tag that does not overlap other elements; and

placing and an end tag at the end tag location, wherein the end tag is an empty tag that does not overlap other elements; and wherein the start tag and the end tag may span other tags while maintaining a well formed ML document.

2 (currently amended): The method of Claim 1, wherein the start tag and the end tag include an identifier attribute that may be used to indicate an association between associates the start tag and the end tag.

3 (currently amended): The method of Claim 2, wherein ~~at least one of the start tag and the end tag includes an~~ the identifier attribute is set to a same value within the start tag and the end tag.

4 (original): The method of Claim 2, wherein the ML document is an XML document.

5 (currently amended): The method of Claim 3, wherein the start tag and the end tag that span other elements are empty tags named differently.

6 (original): The method of Claim 5, wherein the start tag and the end tag are bookmarks.

7 (original): The method of Claim 6, further comprising, using the bookmarks to create an index a set of documents.

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8 (original): The method of Claim 5, wherein the start tag and the end tag may be used for at least one function selected from a set comprising: annotating, proofing, range protection, commenting, and permissions.

9 (currently amended): A computer-readable medium for representing non-structured features that span other tags in a ML document, comprising:

determining locations for a start tag and an end tag; wherein the location of the start tag indicates a starting position for a non-structured feature and the location of the end tag represents an ending position for the non-structured feature; and

placing the start tag and the end tag at the determined locations, wherein the start tag and the end tag are empty tags that may span other tags within the ML document while adhering to a well formed ML rule.

10 (original): The computer-readable medium of Claim 9, wherein at least one of the start tag and the end tag includes an identifier that is used to indicate an association between the start tag and the end tag.

11 (original): The computer-readable medium of Claim 10, wherein the ML document is an XML document.

12 (currently amended): The computer-readable medium of Claim ~~9~~¹¹, wherein the start tag and the end tag each include an attribute that is set to a same value indicating the association between the start tag and the end tag ~~are empty tags~~.

13 (original): The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, wherein the start tag and the end tag are bookmarks.

14 (original): The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, further comprising, using the bookmarks to create an index a set of documents.

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15 (original): The computer-readable medium of Claim 11, wherein the start tag and the end tag may be used for at least one function selected from a set comprising: annotating, bookmarking, proofing, range protection, commenting, and permissions.

16 (currently amended): A system for representing non-structured features in a ML document, comprising:

an application that is configured to:

parse a word-processor document;

determining locations for a start tag and an end tag; and

placing ~~the a~~ start tag and ~~the an~~ end tag at the determined locations, wherein the start tag and the end tag are empty tags; wherein the location of the start tag indicates a starting position for a non-structured feature and the location of the end tag represents an ending position for the non-structured feature; and wherein the start tag and the end tag may span other tags within the ML document while adhering to a well formed ML rule;

output the ML document that may be interpreted by applications that understand a ML; and

a validation engine configured to validate the ML document.

17 (currently amended): The system of Claim 16, wherein the start tag and the end tag includes an identifier as an attribute of the start tag and the end tag that indicates an association between the start tag and the end tag.

18 (original): The system of Claim 10, wherein the ML document is an XML document.

19 (original): The system of Claim 18, wherein the start tag and the end tag may be used for at least one function selected from a set comprising: annotating, bookmarking, proofing, range protection, commenting, and permissions.